SENATE, No. 1613

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

220th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 14, 2022

Sponsored by: Senator LINDA R. GREENSTEIN District 14 (Mercer and Middlesex)

SYNOPSIS

Establishes NJ Water Data Center at public institution of higher education; appropriates \$1 million.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



AN ACT establishing the New Jersey Water Data Center, supplementing Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes, and making an appropriation.

BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

- 1. a. The New Jersey Water Data Center is hereby established at a public institution of higher education in the State. The purpose of the center shall be to collect, analyze, and publish data on the provision of drinking water and the collection and management of wastewater and stormwater in the State, in order to establish benchmarking data for utilities, provide information on State-wide trends for State regulators and researchers, and promote connections between residents and their water systems. Within 30 days after the effective date of this act, the Governor shall designate the institution of higher education at which the center shall operate.
- b. The director of the center shall develop, publish, and maintain an Internet website that allows persons to easily access data on drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater systems. The data shall be updated at least annually and shall include, but not be limited to, the following:
- (1) performance indicators for each system, including, for drinking water systems, whether each system meets the State's primary and secondary drinking water standards, whether the system has exceeded the federal action level for lead or copper, the estimated number of lead service lines in the system; and the number of lead service lines replaced by each drinking water system;
- (2) the estimated amount of drinking water lost due to leaks by each drinking water system in the State;
- (3) budgetary information for each drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater system, including operating expenditures, capital expenditures, operating budget, capital budget, operating ratio, and the percentage of expenditures spent on infrastructure upgrades and maintenance;
- (4) affordability information for each system, including the average annual cost, per residential household as a percentage of the average income in the service area, for drinking water, sewer, or stormwater management charges, as appropriate;
- (5) for combined sewer systems, information about combined sewer overflow events in the system, including the number of events and the amount of wastewater and stormwater discharged by combined sewer outfalls in the system; and
- (6) an assessment of the transparency measures undertaken by each system, including, but not limited to, the posting of rates and the members of the system's governing body on the system's Internet website.

S1613 GREENSTEIN

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- 1 c. The director of the center shall convene an advisory council 2 to assist the center in fulfilling its purpose. The council shall be 3 structured and empowered as deemed fit by the director, except that 4 it shall include at least one representative from each of the 5 Department of Environmental Protection, the Board of Public 6 Utilities, and the Department of Community Affairs.
 - d. No later than two years after the effective date of this section, the director shall submit a report to the Legislature, pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), summarizing the center's activities and identifying priorities for the next five years, including any additional resource needs.

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2. There is appropriated \$1 million from the General Fund to the public institution of higher education designated by the Governor pursuant to section 1 of this act, in order to implement the provisions of this act.

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3. This act shall take effect immediately.

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STATEMENT

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41 42 This bill would establish the New Jersey Water Data Center at a public institution of higher education in the State. The purpose of the center would be to collect, analyze, and publish data on the provision of drinking water and the collection and management of wastewater and stormwater in the State, in order to establish benchmarking data for utilities, provide information on State-wide

trends for State regulators and researchers, and promote connections between residents and their water systems. The bill would require the Governor, within 30 days after the bill's effective date, to

the Governor, within 30 days after the bill's effective date, to designate the institution of higher education at which the data center will be housed.

The bill would require certain basic data to be provided by the center, as enumerated in subsection b. of section 1 of the bill. The bill would also require the director of the center to establish an advisory council to oversee the center's operation, which would be required to include at least one representative from the Department of Environmental Protection, the Department of Community Affairs, and the Board of Public Utilities. The bill would appropriate \$1 million from the General Fund in order to temporarily fund the center.